



OUT FOR GRAFT

Elevated Railroads Have Been Exceeding Their Rights by Vending Gum and Doing a General Advertising Business.

The Nickel People Pay for a Ride Merely an Invitation to Get Weighed or Buy Something.

The Corporation Council Renders an Opinion to the Effect that These Corporations Are Exceeding Their Powers in Running Other Business.

The Last Meeting of the City Council Was Replete with Important Doings of the Greatest Interest to the People.

The advertising business carried on by the elevated railroads is bad enough.

The weighing machine and gum-vending machine is a public scandal. Corporation Counsel Sexton sent in an opinion to the City Council last Monday night, in which he stated that the elevated railroads had no right to maintain news stands in their stations, nor do they control their right of way property for other than railway business, which is specifically granted to them in the ordinance. The opinion goes further and says that companies have no right to conduct any private business without special grant from the city.

"It is a proposition too clear to admit of discussion or permit of the citation of authorities," says the opinion, "that in the absence of a grant from the city no person or corporation has any right or authority to conduct any private enterprise therein."

Under the terms of the opinion the "L" companies are without their rights in maintaining vending machines or selling billboard space on their platforms and in their trains, aldermen who heard the opinion read believe.

Assistant Corporation Counsel A. L. Gettys, who prepared the opinion approved and submitted by Mr. Sexton, said there was no doubt but that it was illegal for the railroad companies to engage in any business other than the hauling of passengers as granted in the ordinances.

"That applies as much to the sale of advertising space, either on billboards at stations or in cars, as it does to the maintenance of news stands," he asserted. "The thousands of dollars' income of the street car companies from all these sources is being obtained by the companies without any legal right or permission. It is necessary that the companies get a grant from the city to do these things."

"It is a matter of uncertainty whether or not the city would have the right to get its 55 per cent of the advertising profits that have been obtained by the railroads through the sale of space in the cars."

Mayor Harrison vetoed the amendment to the firearms ordinance passed March 4 and in an accompanying letter stated its provisions were too drastic and that they would prove too expensive if properly enforced. He added that it would not prevent criminals from getting weapons, because they could buy them in other cities, but reached the class of citizens not intended. He proposed as a substitute a new ordinance which has been drafted by dealers, which was sent to the committee on judiciary. It requires a license for dealers and a bond, and makes it necessary to record the numbers of all weapons. The vetoed ordinance required purchasers of weapons to get a police permit.

A \$10,000 appropriation for investigation work by the civil service commission precipitated a lively debate, in which Ald. Coughlin and Ahern declared police investigation was unnecessary, and that the money could be better used for other purposes. The message was passed, however.

Ald. Cermak introduced a measure to give the building commissioner discretionary power in allowing building code violations.

Other business transacted by the

City Council included the following:

Resolution to incorporate ten new provisions in the shore improvement contract between the Illinois Central Railroad and the South Park Board referred.

Mayor Harrison vetoed the firearms ordinance and offered a substitute, less drastic, which was referred.

Mayor empowered to name committee of fifty citizens to raise fund and entertain delegates to the International Navigation Congress.

Resolution empowering purchase or condemnation of land for North Side bathing beach passed.

Order passed granting two weeks' vacation to city employees.

Orders making Longwood avenue a pleasure drive, forbidding heavy traffic on the thoroughfare, and changing the name to Longwood drive referred.

What has become of that Anthony report on the sanitary district?

New York covers nearly twice as much territory as Chicago and collects twice as much garbage. Yet Chicago pays twice as much as New York for poorer service.

We will say this for Lorimer: No matter what happens to him, he was fortunate in some of the enemies he made in Chicago.

With porterhouse steak selling at 36 cents and bacon at 32 cents per pound, it is no wonder the trend of public sentiment is for Roosevelt. If the coal barons raise the price of hard coal 40 cents per ton, as they say they will, he will carry every northern state.

We are in receipt of a circular from a Boston firm advertising the merits of a paper towel made by it. One full page of the circular calls attention to the fact that Chicago is the only city in the country which prohibits the "common" towel in washrooms by ordinance. This reminds us that Chicago is the only city in the country which passed an ordinance compelling property owners to install gas shut-offs at \$100 to \$200 a lot. Pads come high but Chicago must have them.

To show how great minds always run in the same direction, the "friend of the people" in the Tribune is now deluged with letters as to the proper way to make wills. The "lights in hallways" contributors appeared to have taken a rest.

City Electrician Ray Palmer and representatives of the various Chicago traction interests conferred on Monday in an effort to agree on the terms of the proposed electrolysis ordinance designed to control the escaping electrical currents which annually damage underground pipes of the city to the extent of more than \$600,000.

The conference, which was attended by Attorneys Leonard A. Busby and W. W. Gurley, representing the Chicago Railways companies, was arranged after the city department head had attacked the arguments of the railway company with a vigor and a mass of figures that seemed to stagger

the railway engineering experts. This discussion was in the morning at a meeting of the council committee on gas, light and oil, called to consider the ordinance.

"Chicago spent \$222,000,000 on extraordinary improvements in the

Hotel LaSalle. Mr. Wacker's address was illustrated with lantern slides.

The speaker dwelt particularly on the importance of having the Field museum located downtown, and discussed the subject of an equitable agreement with the Illinois Central Railroad Company for the proposed site east of the company's depot at Twelfth street.

He said he hoped that those opposing and friendly to the proposition will get together and adopt an agreement that will be satisfactory to all.

According to a report from Washington Chicago is to receive an appropriation of \$350,000 as the first installment upon the work of the federal government in the improvement of its harbor. Assurances that the appropriation will be made have been given Representative Thomas Gallagher by members of the house conference committee now considering the river and harbor appropriation bill.

North Side sewers have not been cleaned in so long a time that people complain of flooded basements every time it rains.

A good shake-up would help the fire department.

Members of the harbors, wharves and bridges committee of the city council are not going to take hasty action on the south shore proposition.

At the request of Alderman Ryan action on a set of resolutions introduced at Monday night's council session which urge changes in the contract between the Illinois Central Railroad and the South Park commissioners, the matter was deferred for one week. Meantime the resolutions and the improvement contract will be printed in the council proceedings so that all aldermen can familiarize themselves with the question.

The Chicago Bar Association is going after the Shysters and ambulance chasers. The annual report of the association was made on Tuesday.

"Unconscionable shysters," "trouble hunting pluggers" and "defamers of the profession" are some of the hot

PHONE ROBBERY

The People of Chicago Pray for Deliverance from the Grasp of the Awful Bell Monopoly.

Chicagoans Forced to Pile Up the Profits of Three Different Corporations and Thus Boost Stock Dividends.

The Bell Monopoly Owns the Local Telephone Company and the Western Electrical Company and Makes One of Them Patronize the Other.

As the Bell Company Wants a Big Profit Itself It Is Easy to See Why Telephone Rates Are to Be Raised.

The enormous dividends paid to its stockholders by the Telephone Trust are wrung from the pockets of the people by excessive telephone charges. Telephone rates must be reduced and in time they will be.

The fact that one city council will barter away the people's rights is no

contribution to the necessities of the phone gang. His report strangely enough showed that the Chicago branch of the monopoly is owned by, boots and breeches by the American Telephone crowd who control the telephone business of the whole country. His report also shows that the Chicago branch of the monopoly is obliged to buy all of its equipment from a notorious Electric Company which is also owned by the American Telephone Trust. This company makes its own prices for what it sells to the other concern and the people of Chicago are expected to pay for the profits of both subsidiary institutions of the Trust.

Chicago people demand a reduction of telephone rates. A cent a call or at the most 2 1/2 cents a call would yield the telephone company a profit and save money for the people.

In big advertisements printed in Chicago daily newspapers April 15, 1912, the concern offering \$14,000,000 of telephone bonds for sale, quotes a letter from the president of the company in which it is stated that telephone—

"Earnings have shown a steady and substantial growth, having increased from \$3,129,238 in 1900 to \$12,073,390.57 in 1911, or an increase of over 300 per cent in the past eleven years."

Why not give the public the benefit of this prosperity?

The Chicago Telephone Company, which is suffering so much from want of funds, according to certain city "experts" that it will have to raise telephone rates on the people in order to exist, paid 8 per cent in dividends last year.

Think of it! Eight per cent on twenty-seven million dollars!

This is the company that started with a capital stock of half a million and now has a capital stock of twenty-seven millions.

It pays 8 per cent annual dividend on twenty-seven millions and puts up a twenty-two story modern office building besides.

The people of Chicago are such easy marks that the phone crowd want to get more out of them and asks for an increase of rates at the hands of the City Council.

And two "experts" agree that this "poor" company is losing money!

In 1911 the Chicago Telephone Company paid 8 per cent in quarterly dividends of 2 per cent March 31, 3 per cent June 30, 2 per cent September 30, 2 per cent December 30, 1911.

Here is a nice little nest egg of \$2,100,000 divided up among the stockholders.

When to this is added the profits paid the "parent" Bell Telephone Company, the amount grabbed off the people of Chicago is simply enormous. Instead of raising telephone rates, the City Council should lower them. People demand the penny telephone and lower charges all along the line.

From a learned "expert's" report to the City Council we learn that: Telephone rates should be raised because the Bell Telephone Company owns the local telephone company. Because the Western Electrical

Company is also owned by the Bell Telephone Company.

Because the local telephone company is obliged to buy all of its equipment and necessities from the Western Electrical Company.

Because neither the Western Electrical Company or the local telephone company would have big enough profits to suit the Bell Telephone, which owns them, if Chicago people were not pressed for a little more coin and their telephone rates raised.

Because the local telephone company has increased its capital stock from the original \$500,000 to \$27,000,000 and \$5,000,000 more in bonds. Because the stockholders would not get big enough dividends on this immense stock issue if the people of Chicago were not squeezed.

Therefore the telephone company has the nerve to ask the City Council to raise the rates on the people of Chicago.

The people of Chicago are to be used as sponges by the telephone monopoly and the last drop is to be squeezed out of them.

In the meantime it would be well for the aldermen to inquire into the alleged relations, in the past, of certain city officials with the above electrical company, the twin of the local telephone company, both being owned by the Bell monopoly.

The telephone gang want the council to raise the rates on all phones.

To abolish all fat phones and make everybody take measured service.

To put a nickel in every phone before connection is made.

Fire Marshal Seyforth asserted that as practically one-half of the fire and police alarms are received by telephone, he did not favor the general installation of the "pay-in-advance" type of telephone instrument now being placed in various parts of the city by the telephone company.

Competition in the telephone field is necessary if the people are to get relief from present high rates for phone service.

The Telephone Trust has commenced a bitter and an uncalled for attack on the Mayor and honest aldermen of the city of Chicago who are fighting for the people's rights against a heartless monopoly.

The Telephone Trust is opposed to the honest, capable and efficient service that Mr. J. Ogden Armour and his colleagues are prepared to give to the city with their automatic service.

The Telephone Trust has changed managers in Chicago and has decided to throw dirt upon honest men in the city government who oppose its domineering and extortionate methods.

The Illinois Tunnel Company has fully complied with the terms of its ordinance and yet the grafters unless it is not satisfied.

It wants the Illinois Tunnel Company which has expended over \$2,500,000 in instruments, wires and station equipments, to be forced to give up all of this to satisfy the Telephone Trust.

Any alderman who votes in favor of an increase of rates for the Telephone Monopoly will be beaten to a finish the next time he runs for office.

According to some accounts several men who are working for the monopoly and its franchise may not be



GEORGE B. SWIFT.
Former Mayor and Public-Spirited Citizen.

twenty-five years last preceding 1906, and we have a city without a plan, without a system. If we spend \$222,000,000 in the next twenty-five years on a systematic, orderly and economic plan we will not have the haphazard and disorderly conditions that we have today."

This bit of history and prophecy was offered by Charles H. Wacker before the Co-operative Realty Club in the

shots hurled into the camp of the gun-shoe barristers by President Edgar B. Tolman. He says in his report that shysters are the common enemy of all honest lawyers. They are intolerable, he declared, and should be exterminated.

They have been counted and classified by the solicitation committee of the association of which Joseph R. Burt is chairman.

reason why succeeding councils should do the same.

The fight for cheaper telephone service will go on until it is won.

Mayor Harrison made a popular move when he ordered a new report on the telephone situation. The "expert" whose report is now in the hands of the Council Committee favored the raising of rates and a gen-